



**Calhoun: The NPS Institutional Archive**  
**DSpace Repository**

---

Acquisition Research Program

Acquisition Research Program Need to Know Newsletter

---

2020-02-26

## NPS Need to Know Newsletter Acquisition Research Program, 2020-02-26

Johnson, Michelle; Asch, Larry

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

---

<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/66795>

---

This publication is a work of the U.S. Government as defined in Title 17, United States Code, Section 101. Copyright protection is not available for this work in the United States.

*Downloaded from NPS Archive: Calhoun*



Calhoun is the Naval Postgraduate School's public access digital repository for research materials and institutional publications created by the NPS community. Calhoun is named for Professor of Mathematics Guy K. Calhoun, NPS's first appointed -- and published -- scholarly author.

**Dudley Knox Library / Naval Postgraduate School**  
**411 Dyer Road / 1 University Circle**  
**Monterey, California USA 93943**

<http://www.nps.edu/library>



# NEED TO KNOW

February 26, 2021

Issue 44

This week both DoD and Congress have been talking about what to expect from the FY2022 budget (and beyond). Our top story identifies the few areas under review from DoD as the new administration crafts its first budget. Some of these areas revisit last-minute decisions in 2020, such as shipbuilding funding. On the Hill, Democrats and Republicans are debating budget priorities under the shadow of COVID19 efforts and other domestic expenses. The newsletter includes some research on the defense budget from GAO and the Hudson Institute to put more data and perspective on the topic. A related theme this week is “legacy systems” – what are they, what data is available, and how can we start to let go and move forward with new priorities? There are plenty of thought-provoking pieces in the Acquisition section this week, from how to acquire additive manufacturing to the Space Force’s embrace of OTAs.

Don’t forget to register for next week’s webinar on artificial intelligence! And symposium registration is starting to fill up. Our webinars are limited to the first 500 registrants. Sign up now to reserve your chance to ask questions in real time. See you in March!

## **This Week’s Top Story**

### **New Hicks Memo Sets Acquisition, Force Posture 2022 Budget Priorities**

Paul McLeary, Breaking Defense

The Pentagon will focus on shipbuilding, low-yield nuclear weapons, Central Command funding and force posture and building capacity in the Pacific as it rushes to write its 2022 budget, a memo obtained by Breaking Defense says.

The Feb. 17 memo by Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks underscores the urgency with which the department has to move not only on some major acquisition programs, but also efforts to rethink the US force posture in an era where defense budgets are expected to be flat at best.

In the memo, Hicks wrote that “due to the limited amount of time available before the Department must submit its FY 2022 President’s Budget request, the process to re-evaluate existing decisions will focus on a very small number of issues with direct impact on FY 2022 and of critical importance to the President and the Secretary.”

She directed the Office of the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) to review a handful of critical acquisition efforts.

[Read more online.](#)

## **ARP and NPS News**

### **[Student Research Video: Implementing Category Management Across United States Special Operations Command](#)**

Capt Kelly Wright (USAF) explains how her team (Capt Charlie Mark Dacanay and Capt Moises Guzman) researched SOCOM spending trends to recommend strategies for implementing category management in the near and long term. The top three categories of spend -- IT, transportation and logistics services, and professional services -- are the target for several of those recommendations.

### **[Apply Now: Advanced Acquisition Studies Certificate](#)**

The Advanced Acquisition Studies (AAS) Certificate is one of 15 distance learning certificates offered for part-time, non-resident study by the Graduate School of Defense Management at NPS. The AAS certificate is designed for students interested in defense system acquisition and program management processes. The certificate program operationalizes the business of defense acquisition and creates Acquisition Warriors for the DoD while supporting continuous acquisition reform initiatives mandated by Congress and senior leaders. Coursework in AAS contributes to Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) certifications in the career fields of Program Management, Test and Evaluation, and Production and Quality Management. Additionally, the program provides education supporting the Project Management Professional (PMP) certification. Apply by 29 March to start coursework in July 2021.

### **[CBS News Special: America Changed Forever](#)**

NPS Professor and USAF Major Dan Finkenstadt talks supply chain problems in the distribution of the COVID19 vaccine.

### **[A Unique Take on NPS: Important Then, Critical Today](#)**

Dr. Wayne Porter, USNI Proceedings

## **ARP Events**

### **[Registration is open for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Acquisition Research Symposium](#)**

This year's event will be held May 11-13, 2021 as a live webinar presented through Zoom for Government. Keynote speakers are Ms. Stacy Cummings, Acting Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, Vice Admiral Jon A. Hill, USN, Director of Missile Defense Agency, and Mr. Frederick J. (Jay) Stefany, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. Seats are limited. Register today!

### **[Developing Artificial Intelligence in Defense Programs](#)**

March 3, 2021

Artificial intelligence has the potential to be a game changer for the Department of Defense, military services, and the federal government as a whole. This webinar highlights the latest research from four members of the ARP community, covering the opportunities and challenges in acquiring and developing AI in defense programs. RMDL Kurt Rothenhaus, an NPS alumnus

and current PEO for Command, Control, Computers, Communications, and Intelligence (C4I) and Space Systems at the US Navy, will moderate and kickoff the discussion with panelists Timothy Shives, Bonnie Johnson, Bruce Nagy, and Ying Zhao.

## **Acquisition and Innovation**

### **Viewpoint: Changing Acquisitions with Advanced Manufacturing**

Frank Gagliardi and Matthew Sloane, National Defense Magazine

### **Microsoft calls for acquisition reform amid JEDI battles**

Lauren C. Williams, FCW

### **Biden orders a review of US supply chains for vital goods**

Josh Boak and Tom Krisher, AP

### **National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 Includes Numerous Provisions Impacting Government Contractors**

JD Supra

### **Lockheed, Government Negotiating New 'Skinny' F-35 Sustainment Deal**

John A. Tirpak, Air Force Magazine

### **Space Force chief sees larger role for commercial industry in its missions**

Nathan Strout, C4ISRNET

### **DoD 5000 Series Acquisition Policy Transformation Handbook**

Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment  
(Released February 5, 2021)

### **GAO: DOD has to get a handle on future services spending**

Lauren Williams, FCW

## **Research**

### **Service Acquisitions: DOD's Report to Congress Identifies Steps Taken to Improve Management, But Does Not Address Some Key Planning Issues**

U.S. Government Accountability Office

### **Competing in Time: Ensuring Capability Advantage and Mission Success through Adaptable Resource Allocation**

Bill Greenwalt and Dan Patt, Hudson Institute

### **Defense Budget: Opportunities Exist to Improve DOD's Management of Defense Spending**

U.S. Government Accountability Office

## **Education**

### [DoD launches aerospace center at Tuskegee University](#)

The Associated Press, Military Times

### [DOD to Unveil New Vision for Joint Professional Military Education](#)

Brian W. Everstine, Air Force Magazine

### [CNO Professional Reading Program](#)

## [Congress](#)

### [Watch: Emerging Technologies and Their Impact on National Security](#)

Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing

### [Schumer says Senate will draft tech research funding bill](#)

Joe Gould, Defense News

### [DoD Budget 'Bloodletting' Inches Closer To Reality](#)

Paul McLeary, Breaking Defense

### [Top Senate Republican has 'serious concerns' over Pentagon policy pick](#)

Lara Seligman and Connor O'Brien, Politico

### [Lack of Pentagon nominees could be harbinger of slow process](#)

Aaron Mehta, Defense News

## [Defense and Federal Government](#)

### [Navy looking to slash the budget of its internal oversight office](#)

Geoff Ziezulewicz, Navy Times

### [Brown Wants More Data to Support Cuts to Legacy Systems](#)

Jon Harper, National Defense

### [US Air Force eyes budget-conscious, clean-sheet fighter jet to replace the F-16](#)

Valerie Insinna, Defense News

### [Pentagon's dated budget process too slow to beat China, new report says](#)

Joe Gould, Defense News

### [Commentary: What is a legacy system? The key is relevance, not age.](#)

Thomas G. Mahnken and Christopher Bassler, Defense News

### [Commentary: What Can the Pentagon Realistically Get from Its Advisory Boards?](#)

Eliahu Niewood, Defense One

## [Acquisition Tips and Tools, with Larry Asch](#)

**Some Tips for Creating Acquisition Wisdom: A new tool that doesn't add to information overload and listening to operational contracting officers**

This week has me thinking about what it means to be a wise acquisition professional. Every day it seems like there are more and more resources available, but still the same number of hours in a day. How can you decide what to spend time reading and learning about? I offer that you distinguish between information and wisdom, with a few suggestions for how to get started.

## **Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Contracting Subway Map**

Thanks to Michelle Currier, a Professor of Contracting at DAU, for developing a great Acquisition Tool, and providing us updates adding more great information. The purpose of [the Contracting Subway Map](#), according to its website, “is to provide you with a generalized order of events in the acquisition contracting process.”

Let me reiterate: there is an order of events in acquisition and it can be adapted, but you must understand the art and science of acquisition to come up with the order of events of an executable Acquisition Strategy.

Many folks will tell me they are drowning in information and don’t have time to read acquisition policies, news, research, and sites like DAU Contracting Subway Map, Aida, and WIFCON. We may be drowning in information, but we can never have enough wisdom. The two are related, but different. Wisdom means “having experience, knowledge and good judgment.” It’s hard to be wise if you don’t know enough, but this information must also lead to good decisions in new situations. In our business, I will guarantee if you do not gain wisdom to do it right in the beginning, you will have all the time later to fix it. As I always say, “Pay now or pay later.”

What is most impressive with the contracting subway map is that it lays out the foundational items every acquisition person needs to fight the daily fight to effectively meet mission. The tool starts with two core concepts:

- Industry Engagement: Communications with Industry (they have nailed it on content!)
  - Engaging with Industry memo
  - 4 Myth-Busting OMB memos which include improving communications with Industry and effective Debriefings
- Identify Acquisition Team
  - FAR 1.102 lays out the Guiding Principles for the Acquisition System.

I implore you to read the items above, and you will understand the principles of the Acquisition System, clear up many myths on communications, and feel empowered to meet your mission. You have to make choices about what information you learn every day, and this is one tool that both informs and fosters wisdom.

## **Listening to Operational Contracting Officers (LOCO)**

I know it’s a farfetched concept to listen to the hard-working people in the field, but rather than commission reports, studies, and committees made up of folks who have never done acquisition and contracting, or not done it for years, let’s LISTEN to the struggles our folks go through every day so we can truly reform things like:

- The broken protest system – causing lengthy delays, over and misuse of Direct 8(a) awards, OTAs, SBIR Phase III, and LPTA (oh Congress took care of LPTA - thanks).
- Myriad of acquisition documentation – many items not read by anyone and are file stuffers written by a cottage industry of support contractors.
- New training tools and techniques – Training of fundamentals from people who have done it, and the sharing of lessons learned. Source selection training will help us live in the broken protest environment.

We can do a lot of positive change by LOCO. Let the culture tell us what they need, fix what we can, and ask Congress for help with what we can't in FY22/23 NDAAs.